

**ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES
NEWS RELEASE**



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**2013 Kuskokwim River Salmon Fishery News Release 14
Kuskokwim River Commercial Salmon Fishing Update**

This is an announcement from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game at Bethel for commercial salmon fishermen in the Kuskokwim Area.

The preliminary harvest from the August 6 commercial period in Subdistrict 1-B was 23,195 coho; 706 chum; 20 sockeye; and 2 king salmon. The harvest and catch rates of coho salmon were average for this date. The Bethel Test Fishery (BTF) indices of coho salmon from the most recent three tides on August 7 and 8 were low. Overall, the BTF index is currently tracking near 2010 and 2012, when escapements achieved the lower end of escapement goals after limited commercial fishing.

The Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group (Working Group) met on Wednesday, August 7, to discuss run assessment and future commercial fishing periods. Subsistence reports from the lower river indicated that coho salmon catch rates were high. Subsistence fishermen were cautioned by the Working Group to limit fishing time and the amount of gillnet gear in the water to avoid harvesting more fish than intended. The Department recommended opening Subdistrict 1-B on Friday, August 9. A motion to accept the Department recommendation failed. A motion was made to open the next commercial period on Monday, August 12, which passed.

Based on the Working Group recommendation and recent poor catches at the BTF, Subdistrict 1-B will not open on Friday, August 9. If BTF catches improve over the next several tides Subdistrict 1-B could potentially open on Saturday, August 10. However, if BTF catches do not improve the next commercial period would likely be early next week.

Further announcements will be made from the Bethel Fish and Game office, on the state web site (<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=cfnews.main>), and local radio stations. News releases will be faxed to area villages and local fish processing companies.

For additional information or questions regarding Districts 1 and Kuskokwim Area fisheries, contact the Alaska Department of Fish and Game office in the Bethel at 543-2433 or toll free at 855-933-2433.

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